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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

CONTINUING "THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER"

MARCH 1918

EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

Department of Superintendence

The annual meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association was characterized by constant references to the necessity of teaching nationalism in the schools and to the importance of bending every energy to the support of the government in the war. When speakers began to discuss problems of the course of study or problems of school organization they were invariably drawn in the direction of the ever central themes, nationalism and the war.

There was much discussion of the necessity of organizing a federal department of education. Various committees and conferences were engaged throughout the meeting in taking up the pros and cons of this proposal. There seemed to be very general agreement that a federal system of education ought to be evolved—and that immediately. The objection which was raised to immediate action was that Congress is too much engaged in other matters and ought not to be asked to take up at this time so serious a general problem. Some slight doubt was expressed as arising out of the danger that a change in the federal administration might bring over-radical changes in the educational policy of the country. In answer to these objections was presented the overwhelming need of a centralizing and nationalizing agency to promote and guide education throughout the United States.

One of the most diverting papers was presented by an editor who thought that elementary-school subjects ought to be taken up seriatim. The child should be taught to read. While this is going on all other subjects should wait. Next he should learn to write. Next he should take number and only number; then, in order, geography, and so on. Why doesn't this editor get out all his advertisements one day, all his editorials another, and the news the next? He would then have time to think over educational matters.

It was voted to bring the next meeting to Chicago. This move will be welcomed by everybody who at the meeting just past had to hunt for meeting-places for miles up and down the board walk.

National Society for Vocational Education

The National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education is no more. At its eleventh annual convention, held in Philadelphia February 21 to 23, it passed by the adoption of a new constitution into the National Society for Vocational Education.

The change in name is significant for two reasons. First, the period of "promoting" industrial education is believed by the members of the Society to be over. With the organization of a Federal Board for Industrial Education the first aim and purpose of the Society has been achieved. Secondly, the term "industrial education" is too narrow to describe the interests which now ask for recognition. There are commercial interests, agricultural interests, home economic interests, as well as the narrow interests of the industrial schools and of trade schools. So the name is to be changed and the scope of the Society is to be much enlarged.

There was one significant happening during the adoption of the constitution which will be of interest to school people. The paragraph proposed by the Committee on Constitution defining the objects of the Society is as follows: "The objects of the Society shall be (1) to afford, for all those who are interested, opportunity for the presentation and discussion of the various problems of vocational education; (2) to make available the results of the experience of those working in the various fields of vocational education, both in this country and abroad."

It was voted without objection to amend this paragraph by adding the clause, "(3) to cultivate the closest possible relations between vocational education and general education."

After the constitution had been acted on paragraph by paragraph and was ready for final adoption, Mr. Pratt, who has long been the leading member of the Society and its responsible financial backer, moved a reconsideration on the ground that to specify the Society's relations to general education was to limit its action, in view of the fact that the Society must cultivate relations with labor and labor organizations and with employers. Mr. Snedden spoke in like vein and the adopted amendment was stricken out.

The present writer has repeatedly stated in the pages of this *Journal* that in his judgment any move which tends to set up in America a group of people or a group of schools which are intent on industrial education to the exclusion of general education is dangerous to democracy. No such scheme is possible in this country as exists in Prussia, of a dual school system.

The Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education was thoroughly undemocratic in its organization and purposes. Even at this meeting where the Society was going through its reorganization, the treasurer, Mr. Pratt, made a vigorous appeal for a membership adequate to support the organization. He pointed out that more than half of the funds of the old Society came from a few men who could probably be persuaded to go on contributing, but he said very truly that such an arrangement is bad and wrong in principle. The old Society has again and again been the center for discussions of a separatist type, aiming to keep vocational education and the common schools apart.

The new Society ought, in the opinion of the present writer, to put away the fundamentally wrong attitude of the old Society. Vocational education is not a thing apart. It can flourish only when it becomes a part of our national system. There is something larger than vocational education; it is American education. The new Society was perhaps wise in reconsidering its action; perhaps not. One thing is certain—it will make the mistake of its young life if it attempts a policy of separatism in education. With best wishes for wisdom to the leaders of the new organization and for the carrying forward in a more democratic way of a work which up to this time has been relatively narrow in purpose and highly restricted in its control, this *Journal* pledges its support to the new venture just in so far as the Society cultivates the most intimate relations possible between vocational education and general education.

C. H. J.

Enlargement of School Opportunities

The following statement clipped from the *Boston Globe* is so wholesome as doctrine and so ably supported by strong school men that it deserves wide publicity:

The New England State Officers of Education, who have been in conference in this city discussing problems created by the war, yesterday made public the following statement of their views:

"The great war has deprived the nations of Europe of millions of their youth. The responsibility for the saving and the serving of the democracy of the future must rest upon those now at school.

"This situation requires that the work in our public schools be so related to our country's needs as to make the boys and girls capable in the work of reorganization that awaits them. The schools must secure and retain teachers who will be able to lead, and pupils must be kept in school for a longer period.

"It is important that we increase the emphasis that has been given to the subjects that deal with ideals of community and national welfare, and international relationships. To this end the schools should utilize such existing motives as will assist in developing these ideals.

"Teachers and public must be made aware of the patriotic importance and dignity of the school. This involves on the part of the public an increased financial support commensurate with the increased demands.

"We must resist every temptation to shorten the school year, and to release children before these ideals have become firmly established.

"It is no time for retrenchment in education, nor for a lowering of educational standards. Child-labor restrictions and school-attendance regulations, secured after years of struggle, must be safeguarded and protected. Any opportunity for the proper training of children lost now to children involves risk to the success of the democracy that is to be."

At the conference were State Superintendent of Public Schools Augustus O. Thomas, of Maine; State Superintendent of Public Instruction E. W. Butterfield, of New Hampshire; State Commissioner of Education Milo B.

Hillegas, of Vermont; State Commissioner of Education Walter E. Ranger, of Rhode Island; Assistant Secretary H. C. Morrison, of Connecticut; and State Commissioner of Education Payson Smith, of Massachusetts.

An Industrial Normal School

At Newport News there is a unique normal school. It was instituted to meet a specific need on the part of the United States government—the need for more shipbuilders. It is not unlikely that we shall hear a good deal about new types of vocational education in the near future. The demand for skilled workers is going to be large, and the supply is so short that devices will have to be developed—and that quickly—to meet the new demands.

The following description of the school at Newport News is supplied by its directors:

This school is known as the "Shipbuilders' Plattsburg." It is operated by Uncle Sam in a big shipyard where the din of chipping and riveting is heard twenty-four hours a day. It undertakes to teach only one thing—teaching. Most industrial training schools teach trades, and many persons still think that this school teaches shipbuilding. But if you were to apply for its course of instruction you must be a competent shipyard worker to be admitted, and the more you already know about shipbuilding the better. Its students range all the way from riveting foremen to shipyard superintendents, and from the practical man who cannot read to the vice-president and stockholder in a shipbuilding corporation.

This school is part of the vast detail organization which we have found necessary to build up before we can build ships to win the war. Before we were able to begin building ships we had to build shipyards and man them. It was discovered that shipbuilding had become almost a disappearing industry compared with other American industries, and that the number of men capable of teaching shipbuilding trades to other men, for the purpose of multiplying our ship workers by many thousands, was limited. How were we to tackle this job under the pressure of war, the destruction of German submarines, and the urging of speed, speed, and still more speed by Congress and the American people? That question arose soon after war was declared, and was quietly answered by the Emergency Fleet Corporation experts.

Up in New England there was a vocational instructor who had never stepped into a shipyard in his life. But he was a teacher, trained in the arrangement of technical knowledge so it could be most clearly and quickly laid before others. Summoned to Washington, he drew up a plan demonstrating that our new shipbuilding industry needed the teacher even more urgently than the workman just now. So he was promptly put to work in the industrial-training section, and within a few weeks assembled at Newport News his first class, made up of fifty pupils sent from shipyards up and down the Atlantic coast.

Few of them came willingly—grown men do not like to go to school any more than boys. All came with a certain skepticism, saying, in effect, "Well, here I am, but you have certainly got to show me!"

The last pupil in the original class arrived several days late, from a shipyard far down on the Gulf of Mexico, and after a casual survey of the surroundings announced that he believed he would go back home.

"All right," was the answer. "If you don't feel that you can get anything out of this game, it would not be right to stay and waste your time and your employer's."

There being no train back home for some hours, the newcomer sat down and watched a class while he waited. This class was made up of practical shipyard workers like himself, and they were discussing the best way of teaching green helpers how to pass hot rivets and detect burnt ones. The visitor grew so interested that he missed his train—and changed his mind.

"I guess I better stay on here anyhow," he said, "if it is just the same to you."

The first lesson in this school is one of analysis. The instructors are extremely careful not to tell any of their pupils anything about shipbuilding, for what the practical shipyard man himself knows is to be made the basis of instruction. Some of them are experts in cutting, fitting, and riveting plates onto steel ships, others in drilling and reaming, others in chipping and calking, and still others in carpenter work on both steel and wooden ships. Most of them are steel-ship men, and as something like two hundred different trades and crafts must be enlisted to build a modern steel ship the instruction is as diversified as it is interesting and practical.

The pupil is a riveting foreman, perhaps, and has been sent down here because he is a good one—a man who has demonstrated a capacity to teach green helpers that job. All the operations connected with riveting work on ships have been analyzed by the instructors in this school and carefully diagrammed—the number of men required in each gang for pneumatic-hammer riveting, bull riveting, and hand riveting, with the specific places and tasks of heater, passer, holder-on, helper, and hammerman. But they tell the pupil nothing about this, because they want him to tell what he knows about riveting, and analyze his own methods from a new standpoint—that of arranging his information for the purpose of imparting it to others. Back home he has considered it good work to make a gang of riveters out of green recruits in three months. Here at the school they know he can rearrange his own knowledge in terms of teaching to such good purpose that he will probably be able to break in a first-rate riveting gang in four or five weeks.

"What do you do when you organize a riveting job?" they ask him. "And why and how do you teach others these things?"

Probably he has never thought of his job in terms of systematic teaching before. Supervised by instructors who have specialized in teaching all their lives, it is an interesting, new viewpoint. There is a job as an instructor waiting for him back home at the end of this six weeks' course under Uncle Sam if he makes good. He gets busy laying out his knowledge in terms of teaching, and presently has his trade sketched out on paper.

"All right," says the instructor, "that is what you want to teach. Now, how are you going to put it over so the other fellow will get it? He can only learn one thing at a time. What do you propose to show him first, and what will you show him after that?"

Once more the pupil goes to work on his papers, helped by suggestions from the instructor, and also by talks with fellow-pupils.

This preliminary work of analyzing his own trade and putting it into shape for teaching is done in a classroom at a shipyard. Presently the paper work is over, and they take him outdoors, amid familiar surroundings, putting him in charge of a gang working on a ship, to try out his methods by actual teaching. Here he finds himself thoroughly at home—on the old job, but with a new way of looking at work and at men. For lack of clear technical arrangement his method of breaking in new hands at home was probably slow and haphazard. He went from one man to another, correcting mistakes, showing how to hold a tool or perform a task. His teaching lacked consecutiveness and interest, because he had never thought it out logically. Some of the things he should have told men at the start occurred to him only after they had spoiled work because they did not know them. Some of the things that were most vital, perhaps, he never told them at all, because he had forgotten them himself, or assumed that anybody ought to know that much. Now he is not only led to analyze every step, leaving nothing out and putting everything in, in an orderly way for teaching, but, under the supervision of men who have taught teaching all their lives, learns to instruct others, giving them clear conceptions of the "Why" while he shows them the practical "How." Six weeks later he goes back home and becomes an instructor himself, and when his employer and fellow-workers catch the drift of this new viewpoint on shipbuilding, they usually want to go to school too.

One shipyard sent three men to the first six weeks' course at Newport News and twenty-two men to the second. And while there was some skepticism about the school at the start, that exists no longer. The teacher has quickly made his place in shipbuilding.

This is the first time in the history of American industry, it is said, that skilled mechanical workers have been sent to school to be instructed as teachers in their own trades. It is also the first time in the history of industrial education that a number of concerns, really competitors, have combined in a single industrial training institution. To be accepted as a pupil, a man must not only know his trade as a practical workman, but show some qualifications that promise to make him a good instructor. He must have had experience in handling men, be a natural leader, and hold the respect of fellow-workers through his patience, dependability, steadiness, and knack of expressing himself. Preference is given men between the ages of twenty-five and forty years, with at least five years' experience in their trades, and experience in managing others. Given well-chosen men, willing to learn, the Emergency Fleet Corporation contributes part of the expense of instruction and board, provided the six weeks' course is finished, laying down the condition that the shipyard employing the pupil will keep him in its organization at least six months afterward. The pupil also agrees to remain with the shipyard for at least six months, and what he has learned is applied to the training of new shipyard workers, and in some cases other shipyard instructors.

This school, moreover, takes a keen interest in its graduates. For when they get back on the job their enlarged ability brings a certain danger. Having learned how to teach workers more quickly and speed up production, either they or their employers are apt to lose sight of the necessity for patient instruction in increasing shipyard output under war pressure, and instruction is lost sight of. The teacher turns workman again, and goes after production records. But because Uncle Sam depends upon a few hundred men, trained in this school during the next few months, to initiate perhaps one hundred thousand new workers in the shipbuilding crafts, he means to keep an eye upon that detail, and see that systematic training is not lost sight of in the excitement of playing the game.

With good industrial teachers in all our shipyards, and intelligent mobilization of workers from other trades, we are rapidly organizing a shipbuilding industry which should soon compare with the oldest and best in other nations so far as actual manual skill is concerned.

Shipbuilding is a highly specialized industry in itself, and through years of neglect the number of men familiar with its exacting crafts had dwindled to a pitifully small number for so great an industrial country as the United States. But even this remnant of skilled craftsmen and supervisors furnishes a good basis for rapid war-time expansion. Two things are needed: first, the teacher in shipbuilding, showing how to impart knowledge on efficient lines; and second, care to draw into shipyards workers of kindred trades. We have in this country hundreds of thousands of men familiar with auto repairing, sheet-metal work, structural steel construction, and like crafts. Carefully selected and skillfully taught, they can be made first-rate shipwrights in a short period if each is set to work at a shipbuilding task that dovetails into his old trade. The quarryman and foundryman, familiar with pneumatic tools, are easily transformed into shipyard chippers and calkers. The blacksmith can be made a good shipyard angle-smith if he will learn to handle thinner, lighter pieces of metal than he has been accustomed to working, and a structural-steel man from a skyscraper or bridge makes a good angle-smith too, when he learns how to handle heated iron instead of cold shapes. The house carpenter will find himself at home in a dozen departments of the shipyard if he is adaptable and teachable, and thousands of shop-workers with special skill in machinery and metal easily graduate into the shop work necessary in shipbuilding.

Rochester's Junior High Schools

For several years the city of Rochester, New York, has been experimenting with the junior high school. The success of the school has been such that the system in that city is now moving rapidly in the direction of a general reorganization of all the schools so that the system will all be on the six-three-three plan.

In Rochester, as elsewhere, the building problem has been one of the leading reasons for bringing together in one building the upper grades, which formerly were scattered through several schools. The details of the various plans for the new buildings and their arrangement are given in the following clipping from that city:

> Plans to relieve the congestion in the public schools and to eliminate the portable school buildings which have been in use in several sections of the city have been worked out by Mayor Hiram H. Edgerton and the Board of Education. Work on three new junior high schools for the northwest, southeast, and southwest sections is in the hands of the builders and architects.
>
> The Jefferson Junior High School, which is under construction at the southwest corner of Exposition Park, on the site of the Vocation School building, is to cost approximately $560,000, and is to be one of the finest buildings of its kind in the country. This new school will relieve the congestion in the northwest section of the city and is expected to eliminate all the portables in that community. The Jefferson Junior High School will draw from Public Schools 5, 6, 7, 17, 21, and 34.
>
> Architects are completing the plans for Monroe Junior High School, which is to be located on Monroe Avenue, on the site of the present School 15. This building will cost approximately the same as the Jefferson Junior High School and will be just as elaborate and complete in its details.
>
> The completion of the Monroe Junior High School will mark the end of the portables which the heavy congestion in the southeast section made necessary. Those to be relieved are Schools 12, 13, 15, 23, 24, 31, and 35.
>
> The plans for Madison Junior High School, which is to be built in Wilson Park in the nineteenth ward, are nearly completed, which will relieve congestion and do away with all the portables in the southwest section. Madison Junior High School will draw its pupils from Public Schools 3, 4, 16, 19, 29, and 37.
>
> Jefferson and Madison Junior high schools are to be built on park land already owned by the city. This land has been placed at the disposal of the school board by Mayor Edgerton. The city also saves on the site for Monroe

Junior High School, which will displace School 15, which has been municipal property for a great many years.

The junior high schools will take the pupils of the seventh and eighth grades from the schools in their respective districts, as well as the first-year students from the East and West high schools. There will be accommodations for 1,200 pupils in each of the new junior high schools.

A great deal of the school congestion in the thickly populated northeast section was relieved when School 26, on Clifford Avenue, was transformed into the Washington Junior High School, the first junior high school in Rochester. This change was made two years ago and the good results obtained indicate the foresight and wisdom of the school authorities. The public schools relieved by the Washington Junior High School are Schools 9, 18, 20, 22, 25, 26, 27, and 36.

The junior high school is the solution of, not only the problem of congestion, but the problem of curriculum. Heretofore the curriculum, or course of study, has not considered capabilities and needs, but rather assumed that all pupils were of equal mental capacity. That all pupils are not of equal mental capacity is evident to all.

The junior high school provides differentiated courses along four lines—the academic for those who are going on to the upper high school; the commercial for those who are going into business; the industrial arts for boys who are going into the trades and to work, and the household arts for girls who need and want instruction along these lines. In the industrial-art and household-art courses half of the time is devoted to book work and half-time to shop work.

Minneapolis and the Junior High School

Conflicting reports come from time to time with regard to changes in the Minneapolis schools since the withdrawal of Superintendent Spaulding. The following statement from the *Tribune* of that city indicates that the junior high schools are to be retained:

> Saving of a year in the time in which Minneapolis children may complete work of the present seventh, eighth, and ninth grades will eventually be possible through the plan of closer interorganization of senior and junior high schools and the reorganization of present junior high-school courses to take effect at the opening of the new semester.
>
> High-school credit on a work-unit basis will be given by senior high schools for work in industrial and commercial courses carried on in the junior high school, it is announced.
>
> Establishment of "guide posts" to aid junior high-school pupils to plan work intelligently and in a consistent sequence, and a closer articulation between senior and the junior high school, so the work of each will fit into the work of the other, are the outstanding features of the new junior high-school course of study, Mr. Jackson says.

Division of the work offered into three distinct classes—an academic, a commercial, and an industrial course—will mean better organization of the three years' work on the part of the individual pupil and less confusion in the grouping of seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade pupils in the elective classes, while it will give the child quite as large an opportunity for trying out a variety of trades and types of work as was given under the old plan of requiring certain work of every pupil and giving several options, school officials point out.

Latin will be offered in the eighth grade of junior high schools in the academic course. The work will not be high-school Latin, but will be planned as a pre-language study to help in development of the general language sense of the child to form a preparation for later high-school and college work in languages, and to aid in acquiring a rich and accurate English vocabulary.

"Elementary Latin study in the eighth grade should do for students in academic courses what prevocational courses in industrial subjects are doing for pupils in industrial courses," Superintendent Jackson said.

It should develop a language sense in those pupils in whom the language sense stands out, and give a fundamental basis for later language study, particularly in French or Latin.

Continuation Vocational Courses

The city of Chicago is enlarging its continuation vocational courses. The following statement supplied by the superintendent of schools describes these activities:

CONTINUATION SCHOOL FOR OFFICE BOYS

The Board of Education has established a down-town continuation school for boys employed in or near the loop district. On November 14 an enrolment of 75 was reported, with applications still coming in.

The persons for whom the school is intended are office boys, errand boys, and other junior clerical help. The purpose is to give an opportunity for further study and training to those who have begun clerical service with an incomplete or inadequate preparation for such work, and to give the ambitious boys a chance to prepare themselves for higher grades of service in business.

In general, the plan is to have each student attend school for one-half day each week throughout the school year, or two half-days, or such other portion of his working time as may be found to be most satisfactory to the employer.

The courses offered are such as to correct the student's deficiencies in previous preparation, and to afford him a chance to prepare for the next job his employer has in mind for him: that is, the aim is to make him more efficient. Such studies are much more effective when carried along as supplementary to the regular day's work. What is learned in school is immediately applied in practice.

The school is equipped with modern office devices such as typewriters, comptometers, adding machines, dictaphones, mimeographs, multigraphs, filing devices, and so on, in addition to the regular equipment for ordinary school purposes.

CONTINUATION SCHOOLS IN INDUSTRIAL PLANTS

A continuation school has been organized in the plant of Swift and Company in the Union Stockyards for boys employed in clerical positions, including errand and messenger boys and all classes of junior clerical help. About 200 are now in the classes, which meet for one hour a day, each schoolday during the week. The firm furnishes the schoolroom space and equipment, and the Board of Education bears the cost of instruction.

Arrangements have been completed also for a similar school for boys in the plant of Armour and Company. About 250 boys attend, and the classes began about December 1.

SCHOOL FOR BAKERS' APPRENTICES

Apprentices employed in the bread-baking trade are attending a part-time school at the Lane Technical High School. A complete bakeshop equipment has been installed. Each apprentice attends one-half day a week. About 125 are now in attendance. Evening classes for journeymen bakers are carried on in the same plant.

TELEGRAPHY FOR MEN REGISTERED FOR THE DRAFT

Classes for instruction of men in the continental telegraph code have been organized in five evening schools and in eight industrial plants. About 400 students are in regular attendance. Only men registered for the draft are admitted. Where a class has been organized in a plant the firm furnishes the space and the Board of Education pays the teacher. The Signal Corps lends the instruments and the Board of Education instals them. The plant classes are held at the close of the day's work; the evening classes meet from 7:30 to 9:30. A practical telegrapher is employed to supervise the work. The teachers are all operators; the pay is $2.25 for two hours' teaching.